

COLLEGE PREPARATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (CPPP)
Year 2 Annual Report
March 29, 2002

INTRODUCTION

The College Preparation Partnership Program (CPPP) was established by Senate Bill (SB) 1697 (Hayden), Statutes of 1999, and is in effect until January 1, 2005. The purpose of this program is to provide students in qualifying high schools access to preparation courses for college admission tests, specifically the SAT I, ACT, and SAT II tests. Funds are awarded to local educational agencies (LEAs), school districts or county offices of education, on behalf of their public high schools. The funding level for this program was \$10 million annually. The enabling legislation requires that the California Department of Education (CDE) evaluate this grant program and report to the legislature by January 1, 2005. This document provides an overview of the implementation and outcomes of this grant program as of March 2002.

Grant funding under the program was to be awarded competitively to LEAs on behalf of their qualifying high schools. Priority was to be given to LEAs that requested funding for high schools that had low college attendance rates, high numbers of economically disadvantaged students, and demonstrated school-based efforts to improve the school site's college preparatory curriculum and college going rate. In reviewing the grant proposals, schools were rated on the following characteristics:

- Low university going rate; that is, the proportion of the high school's graduates enrolling at the University of California (UC) and The California State University (CSU) was below the statewide average.
- Larger than average proportion of their students participate in the Free or Reduced Price Lunch Program.
- Below average proportion of graduates completing the university preparatory (a-g) courses.

Schools that had shown recent improvements in their university going rate and/or college preparatory courses completion rates received extra qualifying points, as did schools that

provided additional evidence of their efforts to improve their students' academic achievement and preparation for college-going opportunities.

BACKGROUND

California's high tech economy requires a highly skilled and competent workforce. Numerous recent educational reforms seek to ensure that the state's public high school graduates are competent to move on to their postsecondary activities. But increasingly, the employment opportunities require additional training beyond high school. Ensuring that all students have the full range of postsecondary opportunities needed to become competent and competitive workers has become a policy imperative at both the State and national level.

California has a three-tiered system of public higher education. While the state's community colleges are open to all students 18 years old and older, its public universities have freshman admission criteria that include college admission tests. As competition for university admission has increased, students and their parents have invested heavily in test preparation workshops. But not all students or families have the discretionary income needed to make such an investment. Indeed, the students who are already underrepresented at our public universities are the least likely to have the resources to acquire the additional training needed to maximize their performance on these tests. SB 1692, in establishing the CPPP program, sought to provide these test preparatory opportunities to these students, improving their likelihood of being competitively eligible for university admission.

IMPLEMENTATION

CPPP Grant Program History

Year 1 Grants. In the program's first year, grants were awarded in April and June 1999 with their initial grant period extending to June 30, 2000. In this first year CPPP grants were awarded to 107 LEAs that represented 370 participating high schools. The total grant award amount for Year 1 was \$8,995,876. Because of the administrative effort necessary to establish a new program, many grantees were unable to get college admission test preparation workshops initiated until winter and spring of 2000. In an effort to allow these LEAs sufficient time to utilize fully their grant funding, a six-month extension of their Year 1 grant period, through

December 31, 2000, was approved. The due date for the Year 1 final reports moved from September 15, 2000 to February 15, 2001. Grantees submitted a narrative evaluation of their first year implementation efforts and individual student data of those students who participated in their workshops, as well as a final fiscal report.

As with the implementation effort, providing complete, accurate, and uniform information in their final reports was quite challenging for many of the CPPP grantees. The Year 1 final report provided some summary information about the scope of the Year 1 grant activities, general demographics about some of the student participants and some outcome data. Unfortunately, the quality and variability in the contents and format of these reports, as well as confusion related to the grant period extension, was such that doing extensive analysis of Year 1 program results was not feasible. Staff implemented substantial revisions to the reporting documents, as well as final report processing procedures, in an effort to ensure that Year 2 final reports would generate more complete, accurate, and uniform data.

Year 2 Grants. The grant period for Year 2 of the CPPP Grant Program was from June 30, 2000 through June 30, 2001. For those LEAs that used the six-month extension of Year 1, their Year 2 funding overlapped with Year 1 for six months. Some LEAs were able to take advantage of this opportunity to substantially expand their test preparation workshops. For others, their Year 2 grant period was effectively only a six-month period. The LEAs participating in CPPP in Year 2 (2000-01) included 102 LEAs that continued with their work from Year 1 and 19 LEAs that responded successfully to a third release of the CPPP Request For Applications (RFA) for a total of 121 grantees. These LEAs requested funds for 524 high schools. The total grant amount awarded in 2000-01 was \$11,742,693. In addition to the original legislatively approved program funding of \$10 million, CPPP received a one-time augmentation of \$3.5 million that allowed for the substantial expansion of award amounts. Year 2 Final Reports were due on September 30, 2001. The more streamlined procedures for the reporting and processing of Year 2 reports developed by CDE staff yielded a sound basis for analyzing the CPPP program activities and their impact for this program year.

Year 3 Grants. In April 2001, Year 3 CPPP grants were awarded to 93 LEAs that represented 445 participating high schools. The total grant award amount for Year 3 was \$8,668,488. The

grant period for Year 3 (2001-02) is from June 30, 2001 to June 30, 2002 with Year 3 final reports due September 30, 2002.

Year 4 Grants. The 2002-03 Governor's Proposed Budget reduces State support for the CPPP program to \$5 million. In anticipation of this 50 percent reduction in State funding, the staff decided not to release another CPPP RFA for Year 4 grants. An invitation to current grantees for continuation, or Year 4, funding was sent to the currently funded LEAs on March 15, 2002.

A summary of grant participation information appears in Table 1.

Table 1: College Preparation Partnership Program Grant Participation Summary

Year	Number of Grantees (LEAs)	Number of High Schools to be Served	Funding Level	Grant Dollars Awarded	Expenditures
Year 1: 1999-2000 (FY1998-99)	107	530	\$10,000,000	\$8,995,876	\$3,677,107
Year 2: 2000-01 (FY1999-2000)	121	524	\$13,500,000	\$11,742,693	\$3,726,901
Year 3: 2001-02 (FY2000-01)	93	445	\$10,000,000	\$8,668,488	Fall 2002

Grant Program Requirements

The enabling legislation included specific language about the design of these college admission test preparation workshops. The workshops must occur outside of the regular school hours and must include a minimum of 20 hours of activities with students completing a pre-test, a post-test, and an actual college admission test in order to qualify for their grant funds. Workshops established under this grant program were of two general types: vendor provided and school-based. For each student who fully completed the preparation workshop, the LEA earned \$200 in grant funding. The LEA was required to provide verification that the test preparation program adhered to the specifications identified in the enabling legislation and to provide individual student data that included student test scores on a pre-test, on a post-test, and on an actual college admission test in order to be entitled to their grant payment.

Local Program Design

As noted above, the test preparation workshops implemented at participating high schools have been of two general types: commercial vendor programs and school-based programs. In the Year 1 Final Report, grantees were asked to describe their test preparation workshops but were not asked specifically if they had used a commercial vendor or to identify the vendor. The Year 2 Final Report questions did ask for this specific information. Table 2a summarizes the workshops supported under the CPPP grant program in Year 1 and 2.

Table 2a: Workshop Types

Type of Workshop	Number of Schools	
	1999-2000	2000-01
Commercial Vendors	255	284
School-Based Programs	196	108
Workshop design unknown	29	0

This simple bifurcation of the workshop types belies the complexity and variation in the types of programs in which students participated. Table 2b identifies the commercial vendors, in order of number of high schools served, who contracted with local LEAs in 2000-01 to provide test preparation programs. While all programs meet the specifications delineated in the enabling legislation, these programs varied from “full service” programs, such as the Princeton Review program that even included the vendor writing the state report for the LEA, to more focused

programs that provided training and materials. The school-based programs generally involved one or more of the school or district teachers, usually mathematics and English department staff, who developed a program using a variety of materials and software from a range of sources. Table 2b summarizes the commercial vendors providing CPPP workshops in Year 2.

Table 2b: Commercial Vendors Providing CPPP Funded Workshops in 2000-01

Commercial Vendor	Number of Schools Served
Princeton Review	103
Ivy West	94
Kaplan	39
San Diego County Office of Education	12
Achieva	10
Scholastic	9
UC San Diego – STEP	6
Others – 5 programs	11

Description of Grant Program Participation

Actual grant program participation varied somewhat from the grant proposals submitted by the LEAs. Table 3 summarizes the numbers of LEAs, high schools, and students who participated in CPPP workshops in Year 1 and Year 2 of the program. While 524 high schools were included in the funded LEA grant applications in Year 2, 352 schools were successful in conducting CPPP programs. On the average, the funded schools that were unsuccessful in conducting test preparation workshops were smaller, more rural schools. Table 3 summarizes CPPP participation during the first two years.

Table 3: College Preparation Partnership Program Participation Information, 1999-2001

Year	Number of LEAs	Number of High Schools with Work-shops	Number of Students Participating	Number of Students Completing Admission Test	Number of Students Completing Full Workshop and Test	Actual Grant Expenditures
Year 1	107	344	24,747	18,552	15,671	\$3,677,107
Year 2	121	352	22,315	17,876	16,016	\$3,726,901

Characteristics of Participating Students

The primary objective of this grant program is to provide economically disadvantaged and otherwise underrepresented students with the opportunity to participate in a college admission test preparation course. The Year 2 program data is sufficiently comprehensive and uniform to provide a basis for examining program outcomes and possible impacts. Are CPPP grant funds supporting programs in the schools that the enabling legislation targeted? The average percentage of students in high schools who participate in the Free and Reduced Price Lunch Program or whose family participates in Cal Works statewide is 31.6 percent. The average proportion of students in these programs at schools awarded CPPP funds is 39.7 percent. Table 4 compares enrollment in funded schools and schools with actual CPPP programs, by ethnicity and composition of high school enrollment statewide. In high schools receiving CPPP grants a substantially larger proportion of students are Black and Hispanic students than is the case statewide. The representation of Black and Hispanic students in the schools successful in conducting test preparation programs under their CPPP grant was even larger than that of the funded schools. CPPP grants are contributing resources for test preparation programs in the schools intended in the enabling legislation.

Table 4: High School Enrollment by Ethnicity at CPPP Schools and Statewide, 2000-01

High Schools	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	Other
CPPP Funded Schools	8.1%	9.8%	45.3%	31.9%	4.9%
CPPP Participating Schools	8.7%	9.9%	47.3%	29.4%	4.7%
Statewide	9.0%	8.1%	37.8%	40.2%	10.9%

Changes in College Related Outcomes

The majority of students participating in CPPP funded programs are 11th graders. In Year 2, 63 percent of program participants were 11th graders while another 20 percent were 12th graders. Evidence of an association between the availability of test preparation courses through the CPPP grant and changes in the participation rates of 12th graders in college admissions tests and in college going behavior is not likely to be apparent until these 11th grade students graduate. Table 5 provides the baseline information for following trends in SAT participation at CPPP high schools. Small but positive changes have occurred in average SAT I scores and participation rates have remained stable in spite of enrollment growth.

Table 5: Changes in Participation and Performance on SAT of 12th Graders at CPPP Year 2 High Schools, 1999 and 2000

Year	12 th Grade Enrollment	Percent of 12 th Graders Taking SAT1	Average Total SAT Score	Percent Scoring Above National Average
1999	131,943	38.0%	931	15%
2000	135,092	38.0%	941	16%

Have college going rates changed in schools with CPPP grants? In Fall 2000, the statewide average percentage of public high school graduates enrolling at the state's public universities

was 17.0 percent. At CPPP schools, the average university going rate in Fall 2000 was 16.6 percent. This is a small increase from 16.2 percent, the university going rate for these schools in 1999. The statewide average public college going rate (university and community college attendance) in Fall 2000 for public high school graduates was 47.3 percent. At CPPP schools this rate was 47.6 percent. This was a small decrease from the college going rate of 48.4 these schools had in 1999. These results raise a troublesome question: Are these college preparatory programs redistributing the existing set of students planning to attend higher education from community college destinations to university destinations but not really expanding the overall college going population?

Program Efficiency and Effectiveness

The information provided by LEAs in their final reports, particularly the student information, has many limitations. In examining the results of the analyses in this section, it is important that all of the following caveats be kept in mind. After the reporting and reimbursement problems of the first year of the grant most LEAs understood that in order to receive grant funds they must report testing data for students who complete their test preparation program. In order for the LEA to receive the grant funding of \$200 per student who completed the program, the LEA needed to report the student's pre-test, post-test, and actual test score on at least one college admission test – SAT I, SAT II, or ACT. LEAs varied considerably on which students they chose to provide student data. Some LEAs only provided student data for those students who fully completed the program. Others provided data on any student who participated in the program and took an actual college admission test but may have been missing a pre-test or a post-test score. Others provided whatever information they had collected for any student who enrolled in the program. Ongoing technical assistance has been provided to LEAs to rectify inconsistent reporting processes. However, this reporting variability needs to be borne in mind in considering the following summary. What does the current program data tell us about program efficiency and program effectiveness?

Table 6: Comparison of Number of Participants, Test-takers, and Program Completers by Major Program Provider Type

Provider Type	Participants' Completion Rate	Participants' Test-Taking Rate	Test-Takers Completion Rate
All providers	72.5%	79.8%	89.6%
Ivy West	83.1%	88.1%	95.1%
Kaplan	74.9%	85.6%	87.5%
Princeton Review	79.4%	85.0%	93.4%
School-based	69.4%	80.3%	86.5%

As indicated in Table 6, LEAs reported that 73 percent of the students enrolling in their CPPP-supported test preparation programs fully completed their program. Programs conducted by the three largest commercial vendors, as well as Achieva and the UC San Diego STEP program, exceeded this completion rate. School-based programs and most of the smaller programs were not as successful in assuring full program completion for their participants. Approximately 80 percent of all program participants at least took an actual college admission test. Most of the programs, either school-based or commercially-based, had similar rates of test taking, with the exception of some very small programs. Ninety percent of those who took an actual college admission test had fully completed their CPPP program.

Another measure of the impact of the test preparation program is the change in students' test scores between their pre-test and their actual college admission test. Of the 17,876 program participants who took a SAT test, 15,454 had pre-test scores in the valid 400 to 1,600 score range. Of these test takers, 33 percent had score increases of 100 points or more. Such a score increase provides students a substantial advantage in demonstrating their eligibility for admission to the state's public universities. Seventeen percent of students showed decreases between pre-test and actual college admission test. For three vendors – Achieva, Ames, and Princeton Review, the percentage of students showing an increase in scores of 100 points exceeded this program-wide rate.

Evaluation Summary

Program Strengths and Achievement

CPPP has provided resources to fill a vital need in numerous high schools throughout the state. The program has provided admission test preparation programs to over 22,000 students enrolled in schools with above average poverty levels and that serve large number of students currently underrepresented in our public universities. These programs reach broadly into our rural communities and inner city schools that have historically sent fewer of their students to our universities. Of those fully completing these programs, one in three earned SAT 1 scores 100 points greater than their pre-test score. Such score improvement can make a significant difference in the ability of students to achieve eligibility for admission to a public university. On the average, schools participating in the CPPP program showed an increase in total average SAT 1 scores of 10 points. According to the College Board, a one-point change in average scores at the statewide level is significant. The CPPP programs have already demonstrated a positive impact on the schools and students who participate.

In addition to these overall program level impacts, evidence of change from the school and district level is also encouraging. The following section describes a few of these cases:

- Lake County Office of Education has used its CPPP grant funds to not only provide test preparation programs to students in these rural communities, but has used the program materials and outcomes to engage the teachers and administrators in discussions about strengthening their regular college preparatory curriculum.
- El Monte Unified has used its CPPP program as a keystone in their broader program efforts to inform students and parents about what students need to do to be prepared and eligible for college and how the test preparation program can help them be successful in achieving their postsecondary educational goals.
- Of the 55 high schools currently involved in the Academic Improvement and Achievement Act partnerships, 44 of them are utilizing CPPP funds to support their work of improving students' academic achievement and expanding students' postsecondary opportunities.

Program Areas of Concern or Needing Improvement

The CPPP program began during an era in which high schools were facing major changes with the establishment of content standards adopted by the California State Board of Education and a comprehensive new assessment system. The initial appropriation of \$10 million for this program was probably more than the state's high schools could effectively utilize given the extensive work going on in their regular curriculum. The specifications of the program requirements in the enabling legislation were extensive and its required extracurricular nature were daunting to many schools. Much greater outreach and technical assistance would have been necessary to ensure more schools could more fully use these resources for an extracurricular program.

Once a school was successful in acquiring a CPPP grant, it faced additional challenges in successfully completing its efforts. Attendance was cited most often as a difficulty by grantees. Numerous issues hamper students' ability to successfully complete the CPPP program including participation in sports, lack of transportation, and the need for many students to work or fulfill family responsibilities after school.

Programs implemented numerous strategies to attempt to overcome attendance problems:

- Scheduling the test prep program during zero period or lunch;
- Combining test prep activities with athletic training activities;
- Increased schedule flexibility to allow students to make up time and activities they miss; and
- Increased parent outreach to improve the family commitment to the program and its objectives.

In spite of these efforts, attendance and program completion remain a major program challenge.

Another attendance related challenge that affected program utilization was the requirement that students must actually complete a college admission test in order for grantees to receive any grant funds. College admission tests are given on Saturdays at selected testing sites, which can entail transportation or schedule difficulties for students. At least two grantees were successful in using their CPPP program and its participants as leverage with the College Board to establish

a local testing site. Other programs have worked cooperatively with their regional university to help meet students' transportation needs. But, in the end, successful program completion depends on the students being sufficiently motivated to complete the tests.

In the first year of the grant, many grantees did not fully understand what data was required in order to earn the grant funds. As a result, many grantees entered into contracts with commercial vendors that did not specify the full range of student data to be reported. Because data reported by the vendors did not comply with the program requirements, grantees could not qualify for their state grant funds but they still needed to pay the vendors as specified in their contracts. While many grantees wrote contracts that were more precise for Year 2 and beyond, this initial costly problem may have discouraged some grantees from participating in the program.

Another concern relates to the matching funds requirement. The enabling legislation required CPPP grantees to match every \$2 of state funds with \$1 of local funds. As regular program costs increase and state resources become more impacted, schools are finding it increasingly difficult to identify local resources needed to support this extracurricular activity. As noted earlier, some grantees have utilized partnership arrangements to help with the matching funds issue.

Technical Legislative Changes Requested.

Several technical changes have been requested to address some of the more pervasive problems with this program. One change would allow at least partial grant funding to grantees for students who complete an actual college admission test but may be missing one or the other of their pre-test or post-test scores. This is an effort to recognize the limited capability of the grantees to assure 100 percent attendance. A second change was to allow the grantees to be reimbursed for the same student twice if the students have participated in test preparation workshops for two different admission tests. The rationale for this change is related to the current discussions by the University of California to no longer require the SAT 1 test but to require students to take three or more SAT II tests.